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A Pleasing Morristown Custom

LITTLE Morristown, in Shelby county, enjoys the distinction of having developed a fraternal spirit all its own, and of keeping alive an interest in the past in an unusual and pleasing way. For a third of a century the older generation have come together the fourth Sunday of each May to spend the afternoon singing, as of yore, from the famous old "Missouri Harmony" song book. Sixty or seventy years ago the singing school, with its expert instructor, was a favorite form of social diversion, and the "Missouri Harmony" was a particularly popular book in these schools. Then, with a newer generation, the singing classes passed away, but with the elder folks the ancient melodies, presumably, had imperishable associations, for in 1872 the old Morristown class, was reorganized under its first leader, Dr. D. S. McGaughey. Ever since then they have held their annual meeting; the whole country-side makes it a gala occasion and turns out in force to hear the sonorous bass and quavering treble of the aged singers. The venerable Dr. McGaughey has long since joined the choir invisible, and year by year the ranks of the "charter members" are thinning, but younger recruits have caught the spirit of the occasion, and the class bids fair to continue.

Still another observance of the same character, and in this same Morristown, further indicates the spirit of the place. This is the periodical reunion of the Dr. Fitch pupils. Dr. O. F. Fitch, now nearing his ninetieth year, was an educator, in Morristown and elsewhere in the State, for many years, and it is his proud boast that upward of six thousand pupils have been enrolled under him. It is like a capping sheaf to his labors that, toward the end of a life of faithful service, a goodly number of these sometime pupils should come gathering back to give him greeting. This they did a few years since, bringing with them their resurrected school books; men and women, then themselves growing old, stood up before their former preceptor once more and went through their "exercises," subject to his criticism. "School" was followed by much feasting, after a picnic fashion; and this was the inauguration of a series of reunions that, at the last account we had, bade fair to continue as long as Mr. Fitch lives. May Morristown's pleasing custom be emulated elsewhere.